



NEWSLETTER

OBLATE PROVINCE OF COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

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VITAL ACROSS MANY REASONS

The year 2022 is very significant to us, Oblates living in Sri Lanka, for a number of reasons.

THE 175th ANNIVERSARY OF THE OBLATE PRESENCE IN SRI LANKA



It was in 1847, the first batch of Oblates arrived Sri Lanka (Ceylon). We are fortunate that ours is a mission started by our Founder himself. You already know that the Oblate Provinces of Jaffna and Colombo joined together to organize the Jubilee. We had the inaugural celebration in Jaffna hosted by the Province of Jaffna. It was well organized by the organizing teams of both Provinces. Jubilee is a moment for us to come together as one

Oblate family. It is a moment for all of us Sri Lankan Oblates to revisit together the original charism of our Founder and continue to reflect as to what it means to be an Oblate in the present context of Sri Lanka. The Oblates have done a yeoman service to the Region Asia as well as to the whole Congregation. Both Jaffna and Colombo Provinces are blessed with many committed, dedicated, qualified, professional, trained, competent, experienced, capable and talented Oblates who could be of immense help to the Congregation and the Church at large. We need to stop taking baby steps and need to think globally and think big. I believe there is with us the potentiality and the capability to change the world. Let this Jubilee year help the Sri Lankan Oblates to take another big step in our life. Let it be a moment for us to write a new page of the Gospel making use of the Macedonian creativity and commitment.

37th GENERAL CHAPTER



The theme of the Chapter is “Pilgrims of Hope in Communion.” It tells us who we are as members of the Church and a religious Congregation. We are pilgrims. Our permanent place is in heaven. We are called to be simple, humble, and poor. However, we are not people who have no hope, discouraged or frustrated. We are the pilgrims of hope. Thus, there is so much of joy, happiness, contentment, expectation, longing, belief, confidence, and optimism. Together with the hope comes the element of faith. A hopeful person is ready to endure, rely on God, and be patient.



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He experiences the divine security as a pilgrim. Having bare minimum; but he is satisfied, and joyful. He is sure of the promise land at the end of the pilgrimage. This hope filled, joy filled, pilgrimage is journeyed not as an individual, but as a collective body. There is communion; also togetherness, closeness, concord, and fellowship. There is no room for antagonism, jealousy, disunity, division, hostility, disagreement, indifference and aloofness.

I invite all the members of the Province to own this theme. Let this General Chapter be for all of us a moment to put aside our indifferences, and prejudices and walk together in communion as pilgrims of hope.

THE CHURCH OF GOD IS CONVOKED IN SYNOD ON THE THEME “FOR A SYNODAL CHURCH”



“Communion, Participation, and Mission”. With this convocation, Pope Francis invites the entire Church to reflect on this theme which is decisive for its life and mission: *“It is precisely this path of synodality which God expects of the Church of the third millennium.”* By journeying and

reflecting together on the journey that has been made, the Church will be able to learn through Her experience which processes can help Her to live in communion, to achieve participation, and to open Herself to mission. Our “journeying together” is, in fact, what most effectively enacts and manifests the nature of the Church as the pilgrim and missionary People of God. I invite every Oblate in the Province to join in this reflection and in this journey. However, to “journey together,” we need to let ourselves be educated by the Spirit to a truly synodal mentality, entering with courage and freedom of heart into a conversion process.

I pray that these three important events during the year, namely, 175th Anniversary, 37th General chapter and the Synod may help all of us to truly become what God wants of us Oblates, in this present time.

I need not explain to you the present situation of the country. We as Oblates have been involving ourselves in the struggle and the protest of the people. We are happy that we were able to exercise our leadership role in this difficult moment. Let us continue to be united with the suffering masses and joyfully share with them whatever they need at this hour.

May God bless you all.



Fr. Roshan J. L. Silva. omi

Fr. Roshan J. L. Silva OMI
Provincial Superior,
Oblate Province of Colombo,
Sri Lanka.

OBLATES MADE “ARAGALAYA” THEIR OWN



and clerics, of course a handful lot, who entertained passive and cynical thoughts in their minds about the participation of religious and clerics in the peaceful protests with the ordinary people. For them *aragalaya* was seemingly a fanfare of entertainment for religious and clerics. The image in their mind was that it was an occasion for the religious and clerics to come together to be in some happy conversations, to relax together sipping a cup of coffee or tea, and to make it an event to release tensions of life. They are evidently wrong.

Catholic Nuns belonging to many religious congregations keep vigil through nights ready to form frontline human walls if required to prevent young men and women, who chant endless slogans tirelessly, from possible confrontations with law enforcement forces. Many clerics, both secular and religious, have been pragmatically learning to look beyond their habitual clerical life patterns as well as their conventional norms and regulations for the urgent cause of system change peacefully initiated by the generations of thinking youth. Occasional chanting of slogans by these clerics were not rare. Some give live interviews in the midst of roaring crowds. Many things of uncommon ministerial nature are happening in the clerical and religious world which were not seen before. They are beaming with confidence, hope,

courage, and spirit of union for a change of a corrupted political system. Though the scenario looks adventurous and heroic there is too the risk of degrees of looming persecution. Hence, there is constant vigilance and caution. Thus, the scenarios of *aragalaya* at Galle Face, the peaceful love-revolution of youth, were exciting from one hand and uncertain on the other.

The disturbing fact which is difficult to overlook is that there was a group of religious

OBLATE PRESENCE

The Oblate presence at the event of peaceful youth revolution and the other related peaceful protests was very much, vibrant, lively, and determined. It was inspiring to see that the Oblates in general have made it their moral obligation to make their physical presence felt at Galle Face, the site of the event. They have resolved to themselves that their joining in the activities of the peaceful protesters is the timely and mandatory religious expression demanded of them





at the present times. Several Oblates have made it their habitual weekly or daily practice to be with the crowds at the end of day's work. Many Oblates, irrespective of the distance and geographical location of ministry, voluntarily joined with the other clerics, religious, and large crowds to express publicly their own dissention towards the current political system which has opened ways to corruption and exploitation. The Oblate presence was a huge encouragement to other religious too. The manner of involvement of the Oblates at *aragalaya* and in other related events was diverse in action. They were marching in long rallies chanting slogans with the crowds, coming forward to giving voice-cuts and interviews at times, and announcing inspirations thoughts in public at requests. Surely, the Oblates who participated at this event of community protests should have been able to make their prayers to God more meaningful and effective as the result of their own unique firsthand experiences at the events. The admiration of many on the stance that the Oblates have taken was expressed

in many ways such as word of mouth, social media platforms, telephone conversations etc.

The Oblates, with their involvement not only in *aragalaya* but also in the ongoing issues of the struggles of the people for good governance in the country, identify themselves with and give meaning to the directives of the justice and peace ministry of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The OMI Superior General, in his message to the "Companion in Mission", the directory of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, states, "Oblates are

committed to the ministry of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation as an integral part of the mission to bring the good news to the poor. This ministry is an essential dimension of our missionary lives. The concern for justice, the commitment to be peacemakers and the care for the gift of God's creation are signs that the Kingdom announced by Jesus is among us. This is especially valued by Oblates and is expressed in the Biblical motto of our Congregation: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.' (Luke 4:18-19)"



PROCEDURE

The Oblates know that they are required to look at the world through the eyes of the crucified Savior, so that those who suffer will be strengthened with the hope of the power of the resurrection (Con. 4). Oblates have fulfilled this noble directive in their participation at the peaceful revolution of love of the generation Y of Sri Lanka. At the event of *aragalaya* the Oblates of the Province have learned to ‘really see’ - to have a truthful and deeper look at, to take a contemplative stance and a prophetic reading, to be able to discern in light of the values of the Gospel (OMI J&P Directory) - what is happening in our motherland, our common home. No doubt, the Oblates in the Province would continue to analyze the current situation of the country with a contemplative perspective, to see more deeply the structures that generate poverty, devastation of the environment, conflict and violence, and how they might more fully make the values of the Kingdom more visible and functional.

THE EVENT

From the perspective of globalization, *aragalaya* is liberalism modernized, an enormous vogue for equality and purified system. To be in union with it one has to make a sincere attempt to cast away the differences of religion, race, caste, ideologies, and even gender. It leads a person to a vast learning process which itself is an internal revolution. It has shown that the

parliament’s power is limited both by moral law and by the conventions inherent in the history of the realm. It has shown that though the government is indispensable, it essentially exists for the well-being of the nation.

In the political theory of Thomas Hobbes community is a fiction, and it exists for the use of somebody to become powerful. *Aragalaya* has disproved Hobbes, and it has powerfully made known with its results gained, that a community with clear and focused objectives for the growth of humanity has itself creative power to challenge and transform systems. The missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate should strive to fit themselves into such. Oblates have proved right at *Aragalaya*.

Written by,

Fr. James Jayasinghe, OMI
*Vicar Provincial,
 Oblate Province of Colombo,
 Sri Lanka.*



THREE-MONTH ENGLISH COURSE AT OIHL, DEV ARANA



On June 04, 2022, Oblate Institute of Higher Learning (OIHL), Dev Arana hosted a ceremony to award certificates to A/L students who completed their three-month English course successfully. **Very Rev. Fr. James Jayasinghe, OMI**, the Vicar Provincial, graced the occasion and presided over the Holy Eucharist.

NEW COMPUTER LAB AT OIHL, DEV ARANA



On May 6, 2022, **Rev. Fr. Anton Grecian, OMI**, the Provincial Treasurer, blessed and officially launched the newly outfitted computer lab at OIHL, Dev Arana.

SHORT COURSE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING AT OIHL, DEV ARANA



On July 2, 2022, 30 students from OIHL, Dev Arana began the fifth course for the year 2022, Short Course On Psychological Counseling (Sinhala Medium). Three of our highly skilled oblates, **Rev. Fr. Chrishantha Jayalath OMI - MA** (*Counselling and Psychotherapy, Cainmillar School of Psychology, Counselling and Psychotherapy, Melbourne, Australia*); **Rev. Fr. Subash Fernando OMI - MA** (*Master of Counselling, Notre Dame University, Australia*); **Rev. Fr. Reginald Jayamaha OMI - MA** (*Master of Narrative Therapy and Community Work, University of Melbourne, Australia*) will be in charge of conducting it. Introductions to Psychology, Counseling Skills, Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), Narrative Therapy, the Art of Narrative Therapy, and advanced narrative skills are covered in this course. The course will run for five hours on weekends until September 24, 2022.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IMMERSION COURSE, 2022-POST A/L BATCH



The Certificate Awarding Ceremony of The English Language Immersion Course, 2022-Post A/L batch was held on June 6, 2022, at the Mazenod English Institute in Katuwapitiya. The batch included 28 visiting students in addition to 16 residential students. This Course for the 2022-Post A/L batch began on March 7, 2022, and ended on June 6, 2022. The lectures were given by **Rev. Fr. Lakshman Chrishantha, OMI**, the current director of MEI, **Rev. Fr. Chamika Sudarshana, OMI**, and **Rev. Fr. Assisi Devasiri, OMI**.

THE COLLEGE DAY AT THE MAZENOD COLLEGE, ANURADHAPURA



On May 20, 2022, 'College Day' was held at Mazenod College, Anuradhapura. St. Eugene de Mazenod's life was explained by **Rev. Fr. Shivantha Waas OMI**, the parish priest of Madawachchiya, who is a teacher at Mazenod College and **Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Fernando OMI** touched on some of the Saint's significance for young people.

SPORTSMEET AND NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS AT THE MAZENOD COLLEGE, ANURADHAPURA



The Mazenod College in Anuradhapura held the Sportsmeet and Sinhala New Year's celebrations on April 30, 2022. **Rev. Sr. Sonali Jayasinghe** was the chief guest, and **Rev. Bro. Thilina Fernando OMI**, who was with the Rajabima Oblate community before entering the Novitiate, was the Guest of Honor.

POSON BAKTHI GEE AT THE MAZENOD COLLEGE, ANURADHAPURA



On May 13, 2022, *Poson Bakthi Gee* was held at the premises of Mazenod College in Anuradhapura. From Grades 1 through 4, every class performed devotional songs about the life and virtues of Lord Buddha. **Ven. Batagolle Pangnarathna Thero** of the *Jayanthi Viharaya* graced the occasion. The event was also attended by **Rev. Fr. Sarath Perera OMI**, **Rev. Fr. Chamika Sudarshana OMI**, **Rev. Sr. Subashini HF**, and **Rev. Sr. Alexia**.

ANNUAL LENTEN PILGRIMAGE TO ST. MARTIN DE PORES CALVARY IN HORANA



Catholic nurses of the Nurses' Guild, St. Eugene de Mazenod lay volunteers attached to the hospital ministry of the Oblates in Colombo, and their family members participated in the Annual Lenten pilgrimage to St. Martin de Pores Calvary in Horana on 12 March 2022. The Oblate hospital chaplains organized the event.

WORKSHOP FOR 4TH YEAR THEOLOGY BROTHERS AT NATIONAL SEMINARY, AMPITIYA



At the invitation of **Rev. Fr. Tharanga Hemal**, the Dean of the Department of Theology of National Seminary, the hospital chaplains together with a few Catholic nurses attached to National Hospital of Colombo conducted a workshop for 4th year Theology brothers on 22 March 2022. It was on the history of hospital ministry in Colombo, on the spirituality of hospital ministry and on the measures to take at emergency situations and a practical guide to basic first-aid.

ANNUAL VESPERS AND FEAST OF ST. PETER, THE PATRON SAINT OF THE HOSPITAL CHAPEL



On 02 July 2022, the hospital chaplains, nurses, doctors, St. Eugene de Mazenod lay volunteers, well-wishers and Catholic faithful attached to the hospital chapel of the National Hospital of Colombo participated in the Solemn vespers which was graced by **Very Rev. Fr. Roshan Silva OMI**, the Provincial of the Oblate Province of Colombo. The feast of St. Peter was celebrated on 03 July 2022. The chief celebrant of the Festive Mass was **Rev. Fr. Lylie Fernando OMI**, the rector of St. Joseph's OMI Juniorate, Kohuwala.

ANNUAL FEAST OF THE CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP, PADAVIYA.



On July 3, 2022, the Annual Feast of the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Padaviya, was celebrated. The Chief Celebrant for the feast day was **Rev. Fr. Tharanga Namal OMI**, who also delivered the sermons during the Novenas leading up to the feast.

ANNUAL FEAST OF ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH, MEDAWACHCHIYA.



The Patronal Feast of Medawachchiya Parish was celebrated on March 20, 2020. The Holy Eucharist was presided over by **Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi OMI**, Bishop of Anuradhapura. After the Festive Mass the procession with the statue of St. Joseph took place. The feast day celebrations came to an end with a thanksgiving service before the blessed sacrament and a parishioners' get-together in the evening.

ANNUAL FEAST OF ST. ANTHONY'S CHURCH, RAMBEWA, MEDAWACHCHIYA



Rambewa, the substation of Medawachchiya Parish, celebrated its patronal feast of St. Anthony on 26 June 2022. Considering the situation of the country, the parishioners decided to have it in a low key, giving priority to the spiritual preparation of the faithful. Therefore, the novenas were celebrated at homes, with a sharing done on Sacred Scriptures, which was much appreciated by everybody. There was much enthusiasm on the part of the parishioners though the fuel crisis disturbed their travelling.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AT ST. SEBASTIAN'S CHURCH, KOKILAI



13 children from the Oblate Mission at Kokilai Parish in Jaffna Diocese received First Holy Communion at St. Sebastian's Church in Kokilai. The chief celebrant was **Rev. Fr. Susith Randil Fernando OMI**. The occasion also provided a chance to inform the public about the 175th Anniversary of the Oblate Presence in Sri Lanka. The Mission is led by **Rev. Fr. Jesu Ramesh, OMI**.

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF QUEEN OF PEACE, MALIGAWATHTHA



On July 23, 2022, the solemn Vespers of Our Lady of Queen of Peace, Maligawaththa was held. **Very Rev. Fr. Roshan Silva, OMI**, graced the event. Following morning, **Rt. Rev. Dr. Anton Ranjith**, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo, who had presided over the Festive High Mass, confirmed 45 young men and women.

"GEETHA BHAVANA" AT KURIGNGNAMPITIYA PARISH BY MAZENOD YOUTH JOURNEY



In mid-July, the Mazenod Youth Journey arranged a 'Geetha Bhavana' Session, a Meditative Reflection on contemporary music, at a small substation of Kurigngnampitiya Parish at the request of **Rev. Fr. Prabath Sanjaya**, the Parish Priest. The gathering was presided over by **Rev. Fr. Susith Randil Fernando OMI**.

AN INSPIRING CHORAL PRESENTATION OF HOLY WEEK AT FATIMA CHURCH, MARADANA



The youth choir of *Pueri Cantores*, Sri Lanka presented a choral programme on 10 April 2022 at Fatima Church, Maradana. The event was sponsored by *Sri Lanka Bharatha Cultural Fellowship*. The choir consisting of young Josephians, Shepherdians, Familians and Lawrentians was put together by Francis D'Almeida. They rendered 20 poignant choral compositions in elegant style. A large congregation participated in the service. **Rev. Fr. Dilan Perera OMI** began the programme with the opening prayer. **Rev. Fr. Sriyan Ranasinghe OMI** willingly played the role as the choir's patron.

MISSION AT THE OBLATE PARISH OF HINGURAKKODA



From March 07 to May 20, 2022, Nazareth House conducted a mission at Christ the King Church, Hingurakgoda and at the Church of Our Lady of Assumption, Minneriya in the Oblate Parish of Hingurakgoda. The mission was originally scheduled to begin in 2020, but it was halted due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Nazareth Oblate Preachers were able to restart the mission and see it through to completion this year thanks to the parish priest, **Rev. Fr. Jude Saparamadu, OMI**. The Nazareth Community's Superior, **Rev. Fr. Nilushan Fernando OMI**, along with **Rev. Fr. Assisi Fernando OMI**, **Rev. Fr. Janith Aravinda OMI**, and **Rev. Fr. Tharanga Namal, OMI**, carried out the mission.

GRAND MISSION AT ST. ANTHONY'S CHURCH IN DUNAKADENIYA



From May 15 to May 29, 2022, Nazareth House conducted a grand mission at St. Anthony's Church, Dunakadeniya in the Diocese of Kurunegala. The mission was carried out by **Rev. Frs. Assisi Fernando OMI, Kelum Dias OMI, and Tharanga Namal OMI**. **Rev. Fr. Ananda Weerakoon** is currently shepherding the parish of Dunakadeniya, which consists of 518 families organized into 30 Basic Christian Communities. The mission began with a comprehensive house visiting of the parish. Following that, Oblates conducted various programs for the parish's children, youth, married couples, and adult men and women in order to revive their Christian spirit and assist them in living their lives in accordance with Catholic Scripture and tradition. At the end of the mission, there were also a large number of adult baptisms and rectification of marriages for couples who had not married in the church.

GRAND MISSION AT ST. BENEDICT'S CHURCH IN WAIKKALA

Nazareth House carried out another Grand Mission at St. Benedict's Church, Waikkala, in the Diocese of Chilaw, from July 17 to July 31, 2022. **Rev. Frs. Nilushan Fernando OMI, Janith Aravinda, OMI and Tharanga Namal, OMI**, carried out the mission. The parish of Waikkala with 385 families, is currently under the direction of **Rev. Fr. Sujan Nissanka**. At the conclusion of the mission, there were also 7 adult baptisms, 2 confirmations, and the solemnization of marriages of four couples who had not previously wed in the church.



BASKETBALL MATCH AT THE ST. JOSEPH'S JUNIORATE, KOHUWALA



A basketball match was held on 20 March 2022 at St. Joseph's Juniorate between the Juniorists vs Haiku.

NEW ARRIVALS TO THE ST. JOSEPH'S JUNIORATE, KOHUWALA



On May 16, 2022, 17 Aspirants were admitted to the Juniorate for the upcoming academic year. The Juniorists welcomed the newcomers warmly. The chief celebrant at the welcoming mass was the present rector of the seminary, **Fr. Lylie Jayanth, OMI**, and **Fr. Susith Randil Fernando, OMI**, the Oblate Vocation Director, delivered the homily.

INTENSIVE ENGLISH COURSE FOR POST O/L STUDENTS AT ST. JOSEPH'S JUNIORATE



The beginning of the Post O/L students' Intensive English Course took place on July 4, 2022.

JUNIORISTS' FOOTBALL GAME VERSUS HAVELOCK SPORTS CLUB



St. Joseph's Juniorate versus Havelock Sports Club football game took place at Edward Henry Pedris Grounds.

INAUGURATION OF THE GOLDEN JUBILEE AT THE NOVITIATE, BANDARAWELA



The solemn vespers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was held on July 4, 2022, to mark the beginning of the Novitiate's 50th Jubilee year. At the ceremony were the provincial superior and his councilors. The declaration of the Jubilee Year was made public by the Provincial during the solemn vespers.

In anticipation of the Jubilee celebration, renovating the hostel and novitiate house has already begun. The novitiate community longs to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of "Sidupiyani" in 2023 on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus with all former novices from the two Provinces of Colombo and Jaffna. Even those who afterwards have chosen secular lifestyles will be invited.

NOVICES AT THE 'ARAGALAYA'



Novices joined the Galleface protests on the eve of 26 May 2022.

SILENT PROTEST AT THE OBLATE SCHOLASTICATE, AMPITIYA



On 08 April 2022, the Oblate Scholasticate hosted a Silent Protest, which was organized by the RSA (Religious Students Association), Kandy, to show support for everyone fighting in the streets for country's future, the need for good governance, the demand for justice, and for responsibility and accountability of those in positions of authority.

CONFERRAL OF THE MINOR ORDERS AT THE OBLATE SCHOLASTICATE, AMPITIYA



On February 20, 2022, three brothers were instituted as lectors and eight brothers were instituted for the ministry of acolyte.

ANNUAL SPORTSMEET AT ST. VINCENT'S HOME, MAGGONA



On February 26, 2022, St. Vincent's Technical School, "Susithodaya" Children's Home, and Don Bosco Children's Home had their Annual Inter House Sportsmeet. **Mr. Ranga Kumara Wimalawansa**, a former sprinter for Sri Lanka at the Olympics, attended as the chief guest.



The Olympic Torch was lit at the St. Vincent's Home playground at 2:00 p.m., marking the beginning of the Sports Meet, by the captains of the three Houses (Ciril, Charles, and Luigi).

Ciril House won the competition this year, and Charles House finished in second place. In his address, the Chief Guest stressed the importance of athletics and sportsmanship. The event's main organizer was **Rev. Fr. Sameera Fonseka, OMI**, Games-in-Charge at St. Vincent's Home, Maggona.



VESAK FESTIVAL CELEBRATIONS AT ST. VINCENT'S HOME, MAGGONA



The *Vesak Festival* was observed in St. Vincent's Home with a variety of events. For the domestic staff of St. Vincent's Home, a Buddhist religious celebration, "*Pinkama*", was organized at Rubber Estate Bungalow on May 14, 2022.

Additionally, a *Creative Vesak lantern Competition* was conducted on May 16, 2022 at St. Vincent's Technical School. Waste and organic materials were used to make these lanterns.



LA-KRI-VI NATIONAL RALLY - 2022



La-Kri-Vi Movement, the Sri Lankan affiliate of the International Movement of Apostolate of Children (IMAC), held its Annual Animators' National Rally at St. Vincent's Home Maggona from June 11 to June 14, 2022, under the guidance of its National Director, **Rev. Fr. Asanga Aruna Nanayakkara OMI**.



Famous dramatist **Mr. Sriyantha Mendis**, a veteran alumnus of the La-Kri-Vi Movement, attended the rally's opening ceremony together with **Rev. Fr. Dilan Perera, OMI**, a Provincial Councillor of the OMI Province of Colombo; **Rev. Fr. Justin Silva OMI**, a former La-Kri-Vi National Director; **Rev. Fr. Subash Fernando OMI**, the Director of St. Vincent's Home, Maggona along with a number of La-Kri-Vi Diocesan Chaplains, Rev. Sisters & Brothers and Senior La-Kri-Vi Animators.

The rally was held this year after a three-year hiatus, but given the state of the nation, it wasn't without significant difficulties. However, the animators seized the chance to assemble after a protracted period of silence with great enthusiasm, which led to a participation rate that exceeded 200 members.

The rally's ultimate goal is this sense of togetherness that gives the animators a feel of national belonging and the movement used this opportunity to teach the animators about its yearly theme so that they can explain it to the La-Kri-Vi kids back home. The chosen theme for this year is "My family and I with my Friend, Technology."



Thus, the four-day program included a plethora of theme-related sessions, seminars, group activities, indoor and outdoor games, ceremonies of all religions, and acclaim-generating sessions for literature, music, and arts. Invigorated by those events, the La-Kri-Vi animators would begin their yearly activities at their respective cells throughout the island, holding fast to their mission "*To Create a New World Through Children.*"



THE PUBLICATION OF “THITHA” BY REV. FR. LAL PUSHPADEVA, OMI

On February 19, 2022, nearly three years after the Easter Sunday attacks, **Rev. Fr. W.N. Lal Pushpadeva Fernando OMI**, the outgoing director of The National Catholic Social Communication Centre, launched a book titled “*Thitha*” (Meaning ‘Full Stop’ in Sinhalese) at the Jasmine hall of BMICH, with the full blessing and support of the National Catholic Bishops’ Conference, Sri Lanka.

The book includes a summary of the in-depth information provided in the reports of the Presidential Commission and other commissions established by the government to investigate the attack. After three years, it has in fact served as an eye-opening exercise for the victims, Christians, and members of the general public who are curious about the real details of this matter.

The book ‘*Thitha*’, a publication of the National Catholic Communication Centre, was edited by Editor-in-Chief, **Rev. Fr. W.N. Lal Pushpadeva Fernando OMI** and Co-Editors **Maximus Linton Fernando, Dr. Sachitha Mendis** and **Ajith Mendis**.

BOOK LAUNCH BY REV. FR. AJITH WELLINGTON, OMI

The publication of the book, “Buddhist Perspective on Friendship” written by **Rev. Fr. Ajith Wellington, OMI** in collaboration with **Venerable Muwaetagama Gnanananda**, took place at the University of Peradeniya’s Post Graduate Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences (PGIHS) on 31 January 2022. This book is a treatise on friendship as a life-enriching experience intricately connected with virtue.

During the book launch, **Very Rev. Fr. Roshan Silva OMI** served as the chief guest. **Rt. Rev. Dr. Valence Mendis, Emeritus Professor P.D. Premasiri, Venerable Professors Muwaetagama Gnanananda, Gallele Sumanasiri, Prof. Ranjith Bandara, and Professor Suresh J.S. de Mel** were the guests of honor. The occasion was also attended by Catholic and Buddhist clergy, as well as **Very Rev. Fr. Expeditus Jayakody**, Rector of the National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka and **Rev. Fr. Anthony Lakshman**, Rector of St. Nicholas’s International College in Negombo, who is Fr. Wellington’s brother.

REV. FR. GAMINI SILVA, OMI WAS CALLED TO EVERLASTING REST ON 05 APRIL, 2022



Rev. Fr. Anthony Basil Gamini SILVA, OMI was born on 24 June, 1949 in Negombo and comes from the Kattuwa Parish. He attended St. Mary's College in Negombo. In 1947, he entered the Sacred Heart Novitiate. On 05 November, 1980, he was ordained a priest by the late Rt. Rev. Dr. Frank Marcus Fernando in St. Anne Church, Pallengatura.

He holds a licentiate in Biblical Theology from Gregorian University, Rome. He has served as Parish Priest at the Ampitiya and Nochchiyagama Parishes. He was an exceptional Oblate Preacher at 'Nazareth,' House of Oblate Preachers, Wennappuwa. He was also a staff member of the Oblate Scholasticate at Ampitiya and a lecturer in the National Seminary of Our Lady of Lanka in Kandy.

His mortal remains were taken to Fatima Church on 07 April 2022. The Mass at Fatima Church was officiated by **Rt. Rev. Dr. Rayomd Wickramasinghe**, Bishop of Galle. Concelebrated prelates were **Rt. Rev. Dr. Norbert Andradi, OMI**, who also delivered the sermon; **Very Rev. Fr. Roshan Silva, OMI**, **Fr. Nilushan Fernando, OMI** the superior of Nazareth Community and **Rev. Fr. Paul Nadchaththiram, OMI** representing the Jaffna Province. The burial took place at Borella General Cemetery, and the rite was done by **Rt. Rev. Dr. Velance Mendis**, Bishop of Kandy. We pray that late Fr. Gamini Silva OMI may find eternal peace in the Lord's Kingdom.

REV. FR. CHRYSHANATHA FERNANDO, OMI WAS CALLED TO ETERNAL REST ON JANUARY 18, 2022.



Rev. Fr. Anthony Chryshantha Premasiri FERNANDO OMI, who had served in the Lord's vineyard for over 35 years, was called to everlasting rest on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at the Holy Cross Convent Gampaha at the age of 65.

He was born on July 1, 1957, at Burullapitiya. His parents were Augustine Fernando and Elizabeth Perera. He has studied at the Roman Catholic College at Burullapitiya and Christuraja College at Tudella. In 1983, he professed his First Oblation in Bandarawela. On August 7, 1987, he was ordained a priest by Rt. Rev Dr. Joseph Vianney Fernando at Fatima Church in Maradana. From 1987 until 1990, he was the Priest in Charge of the Wennappuwa Preaching Group. He was the Pastor of Ampitiya Parish from 1991 to 1994. From 1994 until 2007, he was a member of the academic staff of De Mazenod College, Kandana. From 2008 to 2015, he served as the Chaplain at Holy Family Convent in Wennappuwa. Later, he became the chaplain at De Mazenod College, Kandana. In 2015, he moved to Holy Cross Convent in Gampaha, where he served until his sudden demise.

On January 20, 2022, his mortal remains were laid at Fatima Church. **Very Rev. Fr. Roshan Silva OMI**, officiated at the funeral Mass. **Fr. Rohan Silva OMI**, Fr. Chryshantha's batchmate, delivered the homily. The burial took place in the Borella General Cemetery. Rev. Fr. Anthony Chryshantha Fernando, OMI, may you find eternal peace in the Kingdom of the Lord.

FAREWELL TO TWO PIONEER MISSIONARIES IN PAKISTAN

By Fr. Gulshan Barkat OMI (Karachi, Pakistan)

(As Published on The Official Website of The General Administration of The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate on Thursday, 28 July 2022)



Two of the three pioneering Oblate Missionaries to Pakistan, Fr. Joseph THEOGENES and Fr. Job Basil SILVA, both from Sri Lanka, were called to eternal rest on July 13 and 14 respectively. Oblates both in Pakistan and Sri Lanka mourn their passing and offer up prayers for the repose of their souls.

FR. JOSEPH THEOGENES

Fr. Theogenes was born on 26 January, 1939, in Atchuvely, a village near Jaffna, Sri Lanka. He was a loyal son of two Oblate schools; St. Joseph's College in Colombo and St. Patrick's College in Jaffna. He made his First Oblation in 1957 and Perpetual Oblation in 1960. It was on 21 December, 1964, he was ordained a priest by the now **Servant of God, Thomas Cardinal Cooray, OMI**, the then Archbishop of Colombo. He chose December 21 for

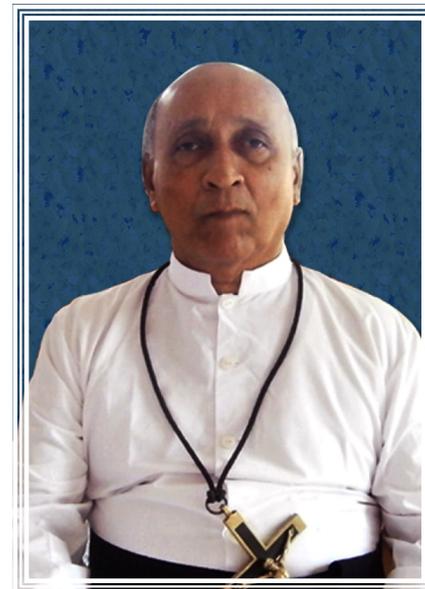
his priestly ordination since St. Eugene De Mazenod, the founder of the Oblates was ordained priest on that day. On 14 February, 1971, he was sent to Pakistan after working for seven years in Sri Lanka.

FR. JOB BASIL SILVA

Fr. Job Basil Silva was also born in 1939, on 29 July to be exact, in Colombo. He made his First Vows on 31 May 1962 and on the same day in 1965 pronounced his Final Vows at Oblate Scholasticate, Kandy. He was ordained priest on 07 May 1969 by the auxiliary **Bishop Edmund Fernando OMI** of the Archdiocese of Colombo. When he left Sri Lanka in 1971 to start the Oblate mission in Pakistan he had less than 2 years of priestly experience. That itself shows the amount of trust the Superiors had in him.

THE FIRST GROUP OF THREE MISSIONARIES, PIONEERS

After an invitation from **Bishop Francis Benedict Cialeo OP** of Lyallpur Diocese (now Faisalabad) was extended to the Oblates of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) to serve in his diocese, a serious talk began to establish that mission. On 14 February 1971, **Very Rev. Fr. Lucien Schmitt**, the then Provincial, accompanied three young energetic Sri Lankan Oblate priests namely **Late Fr. Lester Silva, OMI** **Fr. Basil J. Silva,**



OMI and Fr. Joseph Theogenes, OMI to West Pakistan to serve in Faisalabad Diocese. After having followed an Urdu language course, the three Oblates were assigned to serve in different parishes. Fr. Theogenes Joseph was assigned to St. Anthony's Parish, Antoniaband and Fr. Job Basil Silva to St Pius X Parish, Chak Jhumra.

Fr. Basil's vision started deteriorating in 1989 which became an obstacle to his active missionary life and a year later in September 1990 he decided to leave for Sri Lanka for good. In Sri Lanka, he stayed in Oblate communities at St. Vincent's Home, Maggona and Dev Arana, Polwatta. From 2021 he resided in Marian Grove until he was called by the Lord to His eternal abode on 14 July 2022 after two-week long illness.



Fr. Basil (standing 4th from left) and Fr. Theo (standing 5th from left) in Pakistan in 1970's

Fr. Theogenes, on the other hand, remained longer in Pakistan. He was an outstanding missionary with vision for the future. During the period he served as the Delegation Superior, Fr. Theogenes showed qualities of a formidable administrator and dared to take risks in order to explore new ways and opportunities. During his tenure as Superior, Pakistan Fr. Theogenes was proud to witness the first Pakistani Oblate Fr. Inayat Gill, OMI being ordained priest in 1986.

Fr. Theogenes is held in high esteem in Pakistan for his efforts to implement the concept of Basic Christian Communities. He helped the faithful view themselves as ecclesial entities and the 'Body of Christ'. He was also an educationalist par excellence who worked tirelessly to raise Catholic community through quality education, technical skills and

human/Catholic formation. A number of young men whom he educated, formed and groomed, hold respectable positions in government and private sectors which pulled them and their families out of poverty and raised their economic and living conditions. "We have achieved this much for our families because of Fr. Theo", remarked Mr. Augustine Gian, a former Principal of St. Francis Grammar School Quetta and Mr. Nadeem Bakhshi, an officer at UN World Food Programme in Quetta. He was a spiritual guide to a number of priests and religious. The people looked to him as a model and gave him a title 'Baba ji', a respectable and honorable moniker. As a member of the formation team for a few months in Oblate Juniorate, Multan he employed his skills as a musician, an organizer, an educationalist and a visionary and contributed greatly in the human formation

of young men who were on the way to offering their life to God as oblates.

In January 2001, Fr. Theogenes was called to serve in the OMI General House in Rome as one of the administrative assistants. He served in the Philippines for a few years, where he underwent a successful open-heart surgery. Then he decided to return to Jaffna Province and worked as a secretary to the Provincial from 2016 to 2019. Then in 2019 he retired from active ministry and came to the Oblate Retirement Home in Jaffna where he kept himself busy by helping the Juniorists and the Scholastics in the neighbourhood in spiritual accompaniment.

On 6 July he had a sudden stroke which resulted in paralysis and loss of speech. With breathing complication worsening, he breathed his last on the morning of 13 July 2022. It is interesting to note that Fr. Theogenes, the youngest son of the family was buried in the same tomb where the eldest son of the family, his brother **Rev. Fr. Adrian Joseph OMI** was laid to rest 20 years ago, in the cemetery attached to the St. Mary's Cathedral, Jaffna.

OUR GRATITUDE

The Oblate Delegation of Pakistan pays tribute in utmost gratitude to Fr. Theogenes Joseph and Fr. Basil Silva, the pioneer missionaries for their invaluable years of missionary life in service to the people of Pakistan. You have been faithful servants of the Lord. May your souls rest in eternal peace and be counted among the saints!

In Pakistan Oblates came together to offer a Requiem Mass for the repose of the souls of Frs. Theogenes Joseph and Basil Silva on 18 July 2022 in Our Lady of

Mercy Parish Chak 6/4-L, Okara where both missionaries had served together at one point. **Rev. Fr. Abid Tanveer**, Vicar General of Faisalabad Diocese presided over the Holy Mass and **Rev. Fr. Khan Paulus, OMI** Delegation Superior of Pakistan delivered the homily. Besides Oblates, there were a number of diocesan and Dominican priests along with Holy Family, Dominican and Franciscan Tertiary Sisters of Loretto to pay homage to these two missionaries.

FUNERAL CEREMONY OF REV. FR. JOB BASIL, OMI - 16 JULY 2022



VISIT FROM THE MOTHER PROVINCE TO THE BANGLADESHI OBLATE DELEGATION

Very Rev. Fr. Roshan Silva OMI and Rev Fr. Anton Shivantha Waas OMI, Provincial Councillor, Visited the Oblate Delgation of Bangladesh in the Month of June. Fr. Roshan was making his first trip overseas since he become the Provincial Superior. On 30 May 2022, Fr. Provincial left for Bangladesh. He first preached the Annual Retreat for the Oblates. Fr. Shivantha joined him on June 7, 2022. The Visit lasted until 17 June 2022. The following are Father Shivantha's reflections on his visit to the Oblate Delegation of Bangladesh.

VIDI DEUM FACIE AD FACIEM (GENESIS 32/30)

Human beings do not see God, that was the Jewish Theology, mother of Christian faith. Yet, we see God in beauty – which is found in nature and in the hearts of people we meet. Frankly that was one of my feelings as I left Bangladesh. It was on the 7th of June I landed in this beautiful country buried in greenery and vegetation. As expressed by Fr. Roshan Silva, when the flight was about to land in Bangladesh, one might look around for some



free space to land it free of water as the country is drenched with huge rivers which run across this land of the Bengals.

During the wonderful 10 days I spent with the Oblates, I realized that the Oblates have come a long way, passing many challenges, being faithful to their calling. 50 years after the foundations were laid, they have become well established.

MY REFLECTION

Oblates of Bangladesh, as well as the Oblates elsewhere, are truly close to people. I saw that, visiting the people of the punjis, and tea estates, girls and boys of the hostels and schools, religious sisters who are sharing the mission with the Oblates. The way the Oblates move with people, the way people treat

the Oblates, the closeness they expressed in different ways impressed me.

Another sign of the Oblate spirit is the friendly character of the Oblates. They are people of smiling faces. Oblates are wonderfully friendly, hospitable and welcoming. They treat everybody they meet with a warm heart. This was a strong experience I had when I associated and visited the Oblates in their places. I thought that it must be coming from their blood, as I saw it even among the Juniorists with whom I had the chance to have some friendly chats here and there. They were not only warm hearted; they were also grateful. All spoke of the pioneers with gratitude. I didn't hear any bad thing about the Sri Lankans who worked in Bangladesh. These sentiments coming from their hearts touched me.

I noticed that the Oblates have done much to the people after listening to the stories of the pioneering Oblates. The Oblates still have to travel far, even walking for hours on rough





roads to reach the faithful they serve. It should have been terribly worse 50 years back, without proper roads, proper sanitary facilities or even proper place to stay. Bangladesh today is said to be very much developed compared to the days when the missionaries first came to Bangladesh. The huge buildings which the Oblates own now are fruits of hard labour of the Oblates who have been working for many years. I must congratulate Frs. Emil Moraes, OMI; Rex Culas, OMI; Anjelo Martin OMI and the other Sri Lankan missionaries.

I truly confess that the Oblates of Bangladesh are still full of missionary spirit. Though there are ups and downs, heart to heart they are true missionary sons of De Mazenod. Reflecting on what I saw in the missions, I felt that the missionary experience of some Bangladeshi Oblates is somewhat similar to the conditions of the Oblates who were working at the initial stages in Sri Lanka. Bangladeshi Oblates, I feel, are worthy of the honorary title given by Pope Pius XI – ‘specialists in difficult missions’.

The mission stations are still being developed. Therefore, the missionaries still face challenging situations and conditions, and need a lot of courage and enthusiasm and above all a strong trust in the Lord. The Oblates are doing their best to uplift the living standards of their people, especially through the education of the younger generation. The system they follow is commendable. Facilities for primary education which is more accessible to all, and then secondary education in the colleges at the centres, while providing the children hostel facilities. I think, this was the strategy followed by the Oblates of Sri Lanka some time back.

According to what I see, the Oblates of Bangladesh are facing the situation, we Sri Lankan Oblates faced some years back.

The Oblate Unit of Bangladesh is now mature enough to have their administration in their own hands. The Oblates might have to leave the dioceses in due of time. They have already had the first taste of that, leaving their mission territories in the Diocese of Sylhet.

Yet, after passing the 50th milestone, the Oblates of Bangladesh, I am sure, will have a bright future. Thanking Fr. Provincial for giving me this opportunity, I too must mention that the Oblates of Bangladesh expressed their desire to have some more missionaries from Sri Lanka, the mother province, in the future. Hope some of our missionaries will be able to experience this wonderful mission.

SUMMARIZING MY EXPERIENCE I MUST SAY THAT THE OBLATE MISSION IN BANGLADESH ENCOURAGED ME AND MY MISSIONARY VISION AND ZEAL, KNOWING VERY WELL THAT GOD IS STILL WORKING IN AND THROUGH THE OBLATES TO BRING HIS KINGDOM AMONG THE PEOPLES.

50 YEARS OF SERVICE IN “THE LAND OF THE PURE”



The Oblate Delegation of Pakistan celebrated their Golden Jubilee, 50 years of Oblate Presence in Pakistan. The Oblates began its mission in Pakistan on February 14, 1971 in the Catholic Diocese of Faisalabad (then Lyallpur) at the invitation of the then Bishop Benedict Cialeo OP to the OMI Provincial of Sri Lanka. The first group of three missionaries, pioneers **Rev.Frs. Lester Silva OMI, Basil Silva OMI and Theogenes Joseph OMI** arrived in Pakistan to start the Oblate presence in Pakistan. Others came from Canada, Indonesia, Poland, Bangladesh and Austria. The missionaries have worked in all the dioceses of Pakistan, carrying out the most difficult missions, including Derrickabad (in the Thal desert) and Baluchistan, a geographical desert and mountainous province of Pakistan, bordering Iran, Afghanistan, and the Arabian Sea. In fifty years, the Oblates have taken on various ministries, such as parish ministry, educational ministry,

mission with young people, the apostolate for “Justice, Peace and the protection of Creation”, service in formation, and Marian devotion.

The Oblate Delegation of Pakistan, under its current Superior **Rev. Fr. Khan Paulus OMI**, praise and thank God for having reached this milestone, making a journey of 50 years in Pakistan. They now have 35 priests in Pakistan, 31 Pakistanis and 4 Sri Lankans, they are present in 6 of the 7 dioceses in Pakistan and serve in 10 parishes, most of them in difficult areas. They have houses of formation in Lahore, Karachi and Multan, and in the 50th year

of their missions in Pakistan they founded ‘Mazenod College’ in Lahore to serve the youth and promote quality education. The College was established in Youhanabad, a predominantly Christian district of Lahore, to prepare young people for university studies.

During the Jubilee celebration held in Lahore on 16 February 2022, the **Cardinal Joseph Coutts**, Archbishop Emeritus of Karachi, said: “The Oblates gave professors for the major Seminaries and when we were forming the National Catholic Institute of Theology in Karachi, **Rev. Fr Clement Waidyasekera, OMI** played a decisive role





in its foundation. They are missionaries who open paths of the Gospel in the desert without fear, working in difficult areas of the country where no one wants to go”.

Mgr. Christopher Zakhia El Kassis, Apostolic Nuncio in Pakistan, presided over a thanksgiving Mass, conveying the Pope’s blessing. “It is truly a joyful occasion,” he said, “to celebrate 50 years of tireless and fruitful missionary work by the Oblate missionaries in some of the most difficult and inaccessible areas of Pakistan. I appreciate that you go to places where others have hesitated, committing yourselves to the growth of local communities, to the education and defense of the poor”. The Nuncio recalled “the late **Bishop Victor Gnanapragasm OMI**, who led the Apostolic Vicariate of Quetta for more than twenty years with the support of the Priests of his OMI congregation and served Pakistan for 47 years.”

Before the Thanksgiving Mass, **Archbishop Sebastian Francis Shaw OFM** of Lahore blessed the newly built “Mazenod College”, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the

Oblates’ service in Pakistan. The Archbishop said: “In the last fifty years we have witnessed the commitment of the Oblates in Pakistan. It is not at all easy to work in poor and desert areas. We also appreciate the zeal of the Oblates for the proclamation of the Gospel, for the devotion to Mother Mary and for the priority given to the education of poor and marginalized children in society.”

Due to their inability to get visas in time, **Rev. Bro. Francis Felician, OMI** and **Rev. Fr. Maximus Fernando, OMI** left for Pakistan on February 19, 2022, a little after the official Jubilee Celebration had concluded. Below mentioned are Fr. Maxi’s reflections on the visit:

The love and concern the Oblate brethren shared cannot be gauged and expressed in words as they genuinely manifested it to the best way possible, one defeating the other. Whether it is in a formation house or in a parish we felt very important and proud of our Oblate identity. People have come to recognize the Oblates as they solemnly mark 50 years of Oblate presence in Pakistan that they are some extraordinary band of men who are driven by an exceptional divine force.

The formation houses experience a regular flow of vocations and the four formation centres manifest the tremendous love of the heavenly Father, maternal care of our blessed mother and the powerful intercession of our holy founder, St Eugene De Mazenod. The great love and concern the delegation members share, the cooperation and the commitment of all of them, and the fraternal concern and animation enhanced by foresighted and wise decisions taken by the administration stand high in narrating the flourishing tale of Pakistan mission. Pakistan Zindabad!



LENTEEN PILGRIMAGE TO THE CALVARY AT ST. VINCENT'S HOME, MAGGONA



Missionary Associates of Mary Immaculate traveled to Maggona Calvary for a Lenten pilgrimage on March 17, 2022. **Rev. Fr. Sameera Fonseka, OMI** and 12 other members took part in this event. The program began with a motivational speech by **Rev. Fr. Udara Dharmarathne, OMI**. He related the life narrative of St. Eugene de Mazenod, the founder of the Oblates. After that, they participated in the Way of the Cross and attended Mass at Calvary.

VISIT TO 'NAZARETH' HOUSE OF OBLATE PREACHERS, WENNAPPUWA



On May 08, 2022, MAMI participated in a day's event with the 'Preaching Community' of Nazareth House, Wennappuwa. On this particular day, 10 members participated. **Rev. Fr. Nilushan Fernando, OMI** gave an overview of the Nazareth House, and other priests too shared with the participants the experiences of their preaching ministry.

JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF THE OBLATES OF COLOMBO PROVINCE - 2022



On May 21, 2022, at De Mazenod House in Mattakkuliya, the Oblates of the Colombo Province celebrated their jubilees for the year 2022. The Jubilee Mass was presided over by **Very Rev. Fr. Roshan Silva, OMI**, together with the Jubilarians. The homily was given by **Rev. Fr. Asanga Viraj, OMI**. This year, the following Oblates celebrated respective jubilees.

65 YEARS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

Rev. Fr. Alex Costa OMI

60 YEARS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

Rev. Fr. Anthony Jayamanne OMI

Rev. Fr. Emil Moraes OMI

Rev. Fr. Bosco Perera OMI

Rev. Fr. Job Basil Silva OMI

50 YEARS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

Rev. Fr. Kingsley Cooray OMI

25 YEARS OF PRIESTHOOD

Rev. Fr. Prasanna Rodrigo OMI

AD MULTOS ANNOS



We heartily welcome **Rev. Fr. Sameera Priyadarshana, OMI**, and **Rev. Fr. Lakshan Fernando, OMI**, to the wider Oblate community. They were ordained on 06 August 2022 by His Lordship **Rt. Rev. Dr. Harold Anthony Perera**, Bishop of Kurunegala. We wish them a very happy priestly and religious life in the years to come.

OUR BEST WISHES



The Superior General and his council appointed **Rev. Fr. Anton Grecian, OMI**, our current Provincial Treasurer, to the General Finance Committee as a representative of the Region of Asia Oceania. We send him our warmest wishes.

CELEBRATIONS AHEAD

VOWS CEREMONY

AUGUST 22, 2022

At the Sacred Heart Novitiate, Bandarawela.

OBLATE FAMILY GATHERING

NOVEMBER 07, 2022

For all the oblates' parents and families of their brothers and sisters
at St. Joseph's Juniorate, Kohuwala.

175TH JUBILEE CELEBRATION

DECEMBER 01, 2022

At the Basilica of Our Lady of Lanka, Ragama.

CONGRESS OF OBLATE LAY ASSOCIATIONS, MAY 2022

AORC Lay Congress was scheduled to be held in Colombo and the Philippines physically. Due to the Covid pandemic it was postponed to the 27 and 29 May 2022. Each unit was asked to send 3 lay persons and the Oblate who work in the area of lay apostolate. Frs. Gerry Delos Reyes OMI, the Provincial of the Province of Philippines and Roshan Silva OMI, Provincial of Colombo organized the congress. The technical support was given by Fr. Christian Fini OMI, the Provincial Superior of Australia.

The aims of the gathering were:

1. To know and share the reality of the lay Oblate associations of each unit and at the regional level.
2. Connect between the different realities (Sharing of materials, exchange of contacts)



Almost all the Units were represented at the Congress.

Observations and views:

- ✘ This was the first experience for some of the lay members. Some were new to the use of the technology. However, all the members were very enthusiastic.
- ✘ Sharing during the groups was good. But What we felt was that some members lack the basics of the Oblate life; about the Founder, Congregation etc.
- ✘ We all faced the difficulty of having such meeting virtually.
- ✘ It was very heartening to see the enthusiasm of a young Japanese girl who found her weak knowledge of English, yet had prepared a written paper and showed to us one by one. She was excellent in her explanation.
- ✘ Everybody appreciated the Congress and they are eagerly waiting to meet in person next year.
- ✘ The presence of Fr. General at least for a few minutes was very encouraging.
- ✘ We noticed the tremendous amount of work the lay people are involved in almost all the units. They have taken into themselves the charism and the spirit of the Founder.





PREVIOUS TRANSFERS

REV. FR. CHAMIKA SUDARSHANA, OMI
Staff Member, Mazenod English Institute,
Katuwapitiya.

REV. FR. JUDE SHALINDA, OMI
'Nazareth' House of Oblate Preachers, Wennappuwa.

REV. FR. ASSISI DEVASIRI FERNANDO, OMI
Provincial Secretary, De Mazenod House,
Mattakkuliya.

TRANSFERS FROM 06 AUGUST 2022

REV. FR. SAMEERA PRIYADHARSHANA, OMI
'Nazareth' House of Oblate Preachers, Wennappuwa.

REV. FR. LAHIRU LAKSHAN FERANDO, OMI
Hospital Chaplain, NHC

REV. FR. CHARUKA NAMAL, OMI
Executive Secretary, Oblate Institute of Higher
Learning, Dev Arana, Polwatte, and the Treasure
OIHL.

REV. FR. ERIC LAKMAN, OMI
'Nazareth' House of Oblate Preachers, Wennappuwa.

REV. FR. MAXIMUS FERNANDO, OMI
Bursar, 'Nazareth' House of Oblate Preachers,
Wennappuwa cum Chaplain to the Holy Family
Convent, Wennappuwa.

REV. ANTON D. PETERSON OMI
Co Pastor, Oblate Mission at Kuchchaweli, Diocese
of Trincomalee.

REV. BRO. FRANCIS FELICIAN, OMI
Community member, Tissa Balasuriya Daham
Ketha, Andiambalama

REV. FR. CLAUDE PERERA OMI
Director, Panama Mission, Diocese of Baticoloa.

REV. FR. LAL PUSHPADEVA FERNANDO, OMI
Director, Oblate Media and Communications.

JOURNEYS ABROAD

- ✘ Rev. Fr. Maximus Fernando, OMI and Rev. Bro Frenacis Felicion visited Pakistan in February 2022 to attend the 50 Years of Oblate Presence in Pakistan Jubilee Celebration.
- ✘ Rev. Fr. Asanga Aruna, OMI was in Kathmandu, Nepal from 08 May to 10 May 2022 attending The Faith and Positive Change (FPCC) Regional Faith Engagement Forum for South Asia.
- ✘ Rev. Fr. Rohan Silva, OMI was in Germany from 01 July to 14 July attending a workshop on 'Healing of Memories and Dealing with the Past.'

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

- ✘ In June, Rev. Fr. Bradley Rozairo, OMI, was in Sri Lanka on a visit. He returned to Japan on June 30, 2022.
- ✘ In July, Rev. Fr. Thyagan Fonseka, OMI, made a brief visit to Sri Lanka.
- ✘ On June 24, 2022, Rev. Fr. Joseph Cooray, OMI, arrived in Sri Lanka for his vacation.
- ✘ From 30 June to 28 July, 2022, Rev. Fr. Derrick Vernon, OMI, spent his holidays in Sri Lanka.
- ✘ From July 04 to August 04 2022, Rev. Fr. J. J. Edward was in Sri Lanka.